

## **WEST KINGSDOWN PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Parish Council & Planning Committee Held on Wednesday 23rd July 2025 7.30pm**

- Members Present:** Cllr Mrs P Bosley (Meeting Chairman), Cllr D King (Vice Chairman), Cllr A Blackburn, Cllr I Bosley, Cllr Mrs M Richards, Cllr M Stoneham, Cllr Mrs J Watchorn, Cllr D White.
- In Attendance:** T Baker – Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer, District Cllr Mrs L Harrison, County Councillor Ms M Fothergill, PC Ashley Wilson and 3 members of the public.
- Apologies for absence:** Cllr M Matthew, District Cllr Miss E Bulford, District Cllr S Malone

#### **Members of the Public & Councillors who wish to raise matters:**

The following matters were raised:

##### **1. Bike meets on the A20 Layby at Gorse Hill**

Concerns were raised in relation to the car meets on the A20 layby at Gorse Hill. The Clerk confirmed that she had contacted PC Wilson after this was raised at the last Parish Council meeting and received the following information via email on 27th June 2025:

“We are aware of this. It has been going on for around 6-8 weeks (at the time of writing) and we have a tasking in place from a policing perspective to be in the area when these events are in place. As always happens, we send 1-2 cars up to patrol where possible but of course as soon as we’re spotted, the driving is as it should be, however we can’t be everywhere at once, so we tend to just shift them up or down the road and they then race in West Kingsdown towards Wrotham or up the A20 to Swanley which, rightly so, causes annoyance to residents. But we are aware and will continue with our presence.”

PC Wilson was in attendance and informed council that the location opposite Scratchers Lane is causing a big annoyance and safety issues to the residents and bikers themselves. She said that she believed that the food truck inside the layby is the instigator of these meets every Thursday evening and actively encourages everyone to attend. She suggested that she would investigate the possibility of the police potentially issuing a warning or a closure order on the food truck or something similar, as she was aware of a similar occurrence at Oakdene whereby the vender was shut down as a result. PC Wilson will keep the Clerk informed.

##### **2. Kent County Councillor Maxine Fothergill gave the Parish Council an update as follows:**

##### **Reform UK Delivering Results at Kent County Council**

In just a few short weeks, under the leadership of Linden Kemkaran, our new Reform UK administration has already made an impact. We’ve taken decisive action to get Kent’s finances under control, with some big wins:

- ☐ We’ve reduced the council’s debt by £16 million, saving £2,000 a day in interest.
- ☐ Our “no more borrowing” approach will save another £33 million by March next year.
- ☐ By cutting Member allowances by 5%, we’ve reallocated £202,500 back into our communities — giving each councillor an extra £2,500 in their Member Grant this year.
- ☐ We’ve scrapped the costly Net Zero retrofitting programme, saving £32 million, and cancelled the KCC electric vehicle fleet rollout, saving a further £7.5 million.
- ☐ We’re reviewing expensive external memberships — potentially saving £180,000 more.

This is real, practical fiscal responsibility — not soundbites.

## Smarter Use of Council Property & Resources

We've stopped the unnecessary and expensive move from Sessions House to Invicta House, saving £14 million in planned borrowing. Instead, staff will move back into Sessions House — a building we already own — starting next month.

We're also:

- Reopening the Sessions House café on 21st July, with plans to open it to the public and hire it out for events to generate income.
- Reintroducing office-based working, with 500 new desks being activated by year-end to ensure better service delivery and teamwork.

## Service Improvements Underway

- One of our biggest areas of spend — home-to-school transport — is under review to improve efficiency while protecting vital services.
- In children's services, we're bringing care homes back in-house by purchasing four properties. This reduces our reliance on expensive private providers and will save £1.5 million over the next two years.
- We're investing more in our roads than at any point in the last four years — £79.3 million, up by £10 million. Already, nearly £6 million in large patch repairs has been completed.
- And we're pressing the government to divert a portion of the £87 million profit from the Dartford Crossing into Kent's highways budget, where it's badly needed.

## Standing Up for Kent's Future

We're also fighting to protect Kent's identity. The government wants to push through Local Government Reorganisation that could abolish Kent County Council by 2028. Linden has challenged the Minister and is pushing back hard on the rushed timeline — to ensure Kent's residents are not left voiceless in a forced restructure.

## My Roles at County Hall

Since my election in May, I've been appointed to two key leadership positions at KCC:

- I now serve as Chairman of the Regulation Committee, overseeing crucial governance and regulatory matters across the county.
- I also chair the Home to School Transport Appeals Panel, where I'm currently hearing around nine appeals every week. Each session involves reviewing up to 450 pages of documentation and presiding over a full day of appeals at County Hall — ensuring fairness for Kent families.

## Local Wins in Sevenoaks Rural North East

Alongside these county-wide responsibilities, I've also been working hard on local priorities:

- To secure the continuation of the 489 bus service, which has now come off Aviva's books and been put out to tender. This means the service will continue to operate and serve our rural communities.
- I've been actively fighting to stop industrial-scale solar farms being forced onto Green Belt and high-quality farmland in our area — including attending planning inquiries and working with residents to resist inappropriate development.
- I've also been involved in protect vital green space at Small Grains in Fawkham and Vernon Close in West Kingsdown, which Sevenoaks District Council is trying to sell off — despite the land being used by families for generations. I've brought in the media, worked with parish councils, and that fight is ongoing.

### 3. Gamecock Meadow

Cllr Mrs M Richards requested a further notice board be placed at the lower entrance to the field (Gamecock Pub end) stating the bylaws as she recently witnessed 5 bikes cycling around the football field and 2 men playing golf on the Gamecock Meadow. It was decided to put a copy of the bylaws on to the notice board outside of the library and on the Parish Council Web site and discuss if an additional sign is necessary at a future meeting.

### 4. Burial Ground

Cllr Stoneham informed Members of the Council that there is a low hanging tree in the burial ground over the path leading to the war memorial. Cllr Stoneham offered to carry out the work to trim this back.

Proposed by the Chair

All in favour

### 5. Church Woods

Cllr J Watchorn brought the presence of motor bikes in Church Woods to the attention of PC Wilson, who reiterated that residents need to make formal complaint via the "report a crime" link on the Parish Council's website as nothing is being reported. Cllr J Watchorn informed PC Wilson that this is occurring mainly on Sundays at around midday. PC Wilson will contact her supervisor for advice.

### Planning Committee

**Members Present:** Cllr Mrs J Watchorn (Meeting Chairman), Cllr A Blackburn, Cllr I Bosley, Cllr Mrs P Bosley, Cllr D King, Cllr Mrs M Richards, Cllr M Stoneham, Cllr D White.

**In Attendance:** Miss T Baker – Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer  
District Cllr Mrs L Harrison, County Cllr Ms M Fothergill, PC Ashley Wilson and 3 members of the public.

**Apologies for absence:** Cllr M Matthew, District Cllr Miss E Bulford, District Cllr S Malone

### 2. Declarations of Interest:

### 3. Plans:

To comment on the following planning applications, and any received after the agenda was posted.

### 25/00026/RDPLN

**Site:** 2 Hailwood Place School Lane, West Kingsdown TN15 6FQ

### Appeal

It was agreed to let Sevenoaks District Council deal with this.

Proposed by the Chair

All in favour

### 25/00969/FUL

**Site:** Kings Lodge, London Road, West Kingsdown TN15 6AR

**Development:** Demolition of the existing building, clearance of the site and the subsequent erection of three buildings to create five industrial units in flexible Class B2 and B8 use with parking, landscaping and associated works. Addition of 5 EV chargers and Solar Panels.

AMENDMENT AS FOLLOWS: Response to KCC Highways comments and minor amendments to plans to alter the cycle parking provision have been received. Description of development also updated to narrow the proposed uses.

It was agreed to let this go by default.

Proposed by Cllr Mrs J Watchorn

All in favour

**25/01891/ADV****Site:** Co-op 44C Hever Road West Kingsdown Kent TN15 6HD**Development:** Digital display screen positioned inside the store advertising deals, produce etc.

It was agreed to comment as follows: Due to the close proximity of the hazardous corner between Hever Road and Hever Avenue and that there are residents living directly opposite, hours of operation of the digital display screen should be limited to when the shop is open.

Proposed by the Chair

All in favour

Meeting closed at 8.08pm

**WEST KINGSDOWN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Parish Council**  
**Held on Wednesday 23rd July 2025 7.30pm**

**Parish Council Meeting**

**1. Apologies for absence:** District Cllr Miss E Bulford, District Cllr S Malone and Cllr M Matthew**2. Declaration of Interests relating to items on the agenda.** Cllr M Richards declared an interest in item 7 as she has an allotment. Cllr Blackburn declared an interest in point 9 as he organised the repair of the posts and chain.**3. Minutes of Previous Meetings**

To approve as a correct record the MINUTES OF THE Planning Committee meeting held on Wednesday 25th June 2025.

Proposed by the Chair

All in favour

To approve as a correct record the MINUTES of the Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 25th June 2025 as attached and implement recommendations contained therein.

Proposed by the Chair

All in favour

To approve as a correct record the MINUTES of the Planning Committee held on Monday 14th July 2025 as attached and implement any recommendations contained therein.

Proposed by the Chair

All in favour

To approve as a correct record the MINUTES of the General Purposes meeting held on Monday 14th July 2025 as attached and implement recommendations contained therein.

Resolution to Item 5. It was been noted that the Council failed to comply with paragraph 73 of its Standing Order when it sought quotations for the work to be done in the Old School kitchen. This was very much regretted; however, it was essential that the work be carried out in the summer break in order to ensure that the facilities are upgraded in a timely manner. It was, therefore, proposed from the Chair that in accordance with paragraph 75 of the Standing Orders, that Standing Order 73 be suspended in respect of this matter.

It was proposed by the Chair that the MINUTES be approved as a correct record

All in favour

**4. Any Urgent Business**

The Chairman ruled that any business received since the despatch of the agenda, by reason of special circumstances, be considered, to avoid any undue delay and have up to date information.

**5. Diary Items**

The Clerk informed Council that Safeplay had increased their price for their annual safety check. Safeplay have stated that this will cost more as there would be more to cover during the visit, as they won't be attending the site as frequently. The total price for both the recreation ground and skate park will now be £195 exc VAT.

Proposed by the Chair

All in favour

## 6. Smoke alarms for the Pavilion

It came to the Clerks attention that there are no smoke alarms in the Council Office or Pavilion. The Clerk suggested purchasing 5 smoke detectors at a cost of £15.18 each plus VAT - Alertlink Premium-Quality 10-Year Battery Smoke Detector, Big Test/Silence Button, CE EN14604 & UKCA approved and authorised, to be placed in the Council office, in the Pavilion, in both changing rooms and in the hallway. Cllr Blackburn has offered to fit these free of charge.

Members of the Council agreed that this should be carried out and extended their thanks to Cllr Blackburn.  
Proposed by Cllr Stoneham, Seconded by Cllr King All in favour

## 7. Beacon Row Allotment tree removal

There has been a complaint from an allotment holder that a leylandii tree is encroaching onto the allotment grounds. The Clerk has obtained the following quote to remove the leylandii as close to ground level as practicable and for a full clear up and removal of all arising for a total price of £600 (not VAT registered) with Omega Tree Care. The Clerk has tried to gain quotes from several other companies but none were interested in carrying out this work as it is very close to a greenhouse. The Clerk has also checked with West Kent Housing Authority as to the ownership of the leylandii to be removed and it appears to be located on the allotment grounds. Members agreed that Omega Tree Care should carry out this work.

Proposed by Cllr Stoneham, Seconded by Cllr I Bosley 7 in favour 1 abstention

## 8. Cigarette ends outside of the Hever Road Shops area

At the previous Parish Council meeting Cllr Mrs M Richards asked the Clerk to arrange for the large amount of cigarette ends to be cleared up which have been accumulating outside of the barbers shop. This has now been tidied and the Clerk has spoken with the shop owner who has confirmed that he will tidy up in future but also requested that a cigarette bin be installed onto the wall outside of their shop. This is a much cheaper option than paying littler pickers an hour a week to clear up cigarette stubs and has therefore been purchased at a price of £16.99. Cllr Blackburn has installed this free of charge and the landlord has thanked the council for purchasing and installing the cigarette bin and for keeping this area tidy.

Noted

## 9. Chain and posts at the Gamecock Meadow.

The Clerk made members aware that the posts and chain used to secure the Gamecock Meadow were knocked down last weekend. The Clerk arranged for Olney Maintenance to supply and fit new posts, fix with postcrete and take away the old posts at a cost of £150, and this was rectified Monday evening. The Gamecock Meadow is now secure. Councillors ratified this payment.

Proposed by the Chair 7 in favour 1 abstention

## 10. Wording and location for notices at the recreation ground and skate park

Further to the last Council meeting where Cllr Blackburn kindly agreed to purchase notice boards for these sites, the following wording and locations were discussed and agreed:

- a) Skate park – adhere the notice to the side of the ramp. Wording agreed as follows:

For safety reasons:

Whilst using the skate park, please wear a helmet at all times.

It is not permitted to climb on the skate ramp.

The Parish Council will not be held responsible for injuries caused whilst using the skate ramp.

To report any breakages/issues with the ramp please contact the Clerk on 01474 853286 or

[wkpcclerk@gmail.com](mailto:wkpcclerk@gmail.com) In an emergency "what three words" are ///rare.stole.fame

- b) Recreation Ground – notice to be attached to the gate at the entrance to the park.

Wording agreed as follows:

This equipment is for use by children up to 12 years of age.

Dogs are not permitted in this area.

Park hours are dawn until dusk or 7pm whichever is sooner.

The Parish Council will not be held responsible for injuries caused whilst using this site.

To report any faulty equipment/breakages please contact the Clerk on 01474 853286 or

[wkpcclerk@gmail.com](mailto:wkpcclerk@gmail.com) In an emergency "what three words" are ///nerve.sides.wisely.

The Clerk was asked to forward the wording to Council Members by email for approval before having the notices produced.

Proposed by Cllr King, Seconded by Cllr Stoneham

All in favour

# **11. Footpaths – no issues reported**

## **12. Correspondence**

There was no correspondence

## **13. Amendment to Scheme of Delegation**

This was deferred until the next GP meeting.

## **14. Flooring outside of the Pavilion quotes**

The Clerk has sought to obtain quotes to be discussed during this meeting as follows:

- a) To break out 8 square meters of damaged concrete path, remove concrete from site with grab lorry, relay new concrete path of 8 square meters and 100mm depth and dispose of waste legally and safely and
- b) To remove the existing concrete and replace with slabs similar to those around the front of the library.

The Clerk is waiting for a third quote and therefore requested that this item be deferred until the next meeting.

## **15. Gamecock Meadow access road to the Village Hall**

The Clerk has obtained a quote from Kent Grasslands to remove weeds and soils from along the road leading to the Village Hall for £300 + VAT.

Members agreed that this should be carried out.

Proposed by Cllr Stoneham, seconded by Cllr King

All in favour

## **16. Finance**

a) The income and expenditure reports were received. It was agreed payments totalling £9586.84 would be paid.

Proposed by Cllr I Bosley, seconded by Cllr Stoneham

All in favour

## **17. Matters Arising**

### **a) Burial Ground Works Party**

This will be held on Friday 8th August at 9.30. The Clerk will advertise this on Facebook so that residents have the opportunity to attend.

### **b) Bus and car event**

Cllr Blackburn confirmed that works will commence on the Gamecock Meadow on 4th August and take approximately 3 days to complete. The Clerk to inform the Community Cupboard.

## **18. August meeting dates**

General Purposes meeting to be held at 7.30 on Monday 11th August in the St Edmunds Centre, School Lane. Parish Council meeting to be held on Wednesday 27th August at 7.30 in the St Edmunds Centre, School Lane.

## **19. Confidential item**

The Chairman advised that this item was a confidential item and the public would be excluded. The Chairman then read as follows:

“In view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public be temporarily excluded and they are instructed to withdraw”.

Matters relating to the administration of council were discussed.

Meeting closed at 9.36pm